

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 AGR-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-03 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15 STR-04

TAR-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 OMB-01 FEA-01

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R 111834Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1173

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

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PASS AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR/FR

SUBJECT: GATT ARTICLE XXIII: FRENCH QRS

REF: A) PARIS 13977

B) EC BRUSSELS 06170

SUMMARY: THERE ARE SOME HOPEFUL SIGNS EMERGING THAT THE LOG JAM IS BEING BROKEN ON CLEARING APPLICATIONS FOR IMPORT LICENSES FOR CANNED FRUITS. HIGH OFFICIAL IN AG MINISTRY NOW TAKING MORE FLEXIBLE ATTITUDE THAN HERETOFORE. END SUMMARY.

1) FOLLOWING THE NOTE SENT TO MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS REQUESTING EXPEDITIOUS IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR UNDERSTANDING OF MAY 21, 1973 (PER REF TEL A) EMBASSY OFFICERS HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH KEY OFFICIALS IN MINISTRIES OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS, ECONOMICS AND FINANCE, AND AGRICULTURE AS WELL AS WITH IMPORTERS. OFFICIALS IN ALL THREE MIN-

ISTRIES HAVE ASSURED US OF THEIR FIRM INTENTION TO ABIDE BY THE AGREEMENT TO ELIMINATE QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS AND NOT SUBSTITUTE OTHER REGULATIONS THAT WOULD NEGATE THE EFFECT OF QUOTA REMOVALS. THE MAIN PROBLEM HAS CENTERED ON THE AG MINISTRY OFFICIAL (FOURNIER) RESPONSIBLE FOR PROCESSING THE APPLICATIONS FOR LICENSES, WHO AS ARDENT CHAMPION OF FRENCH F & V INTERESTS HAS ALWAYS BEEN RESISTANT TO ALLOWING IMPORTS.

2) AG MINISTRY DIRECTEUR FOR PROCESSED FOODS (PERDRIX) ASSURED EMBASSY OFFICIALS IN MEETING TODAY THAT MINISTRY HAS TAKEN A MORE FLEXIBLE ATTITUDE ON APPROVING LICENSE APPLICATIONS. PERDRIX STATED THAT MINISTRY 10 DAYS AGO SENT LETTER TO IMPORTERS MAKING LICENSE APPLICATIONS OFFERING THEM THE CHOICE OF TWO ALTERNATIVES:

A) FURNISH ALL INFORMATION REQUESTED BY MINISTRY BEFORE ISSUING OF LICENSES TO MAKE SURE THAT IMPORTED PRODUCT WILL COMPLY WITH FRENCH REGULATIONS (THE INITIAL POSITION OF MINISTRY) OR
B) TAKE ENGAGEMENT TO COMPLY WITH FRENCH REGULATIONS ON IMPORTED PRODUCTS IN WHICH CASE LICENSES WILL BE RAPIDLY ISSUED. NO JUSTIFICATION SUCH AS LABELS, STATEMENT ON CONTENTS, ETC. WILL BE REQUESTED BUT PRODUCTS WILL BE SUBJECT TO INSPECTION BY FRENCH EQUIVALENT OF FDA AT TIME OF IMPORT. PERDRIX ASSURED EMBASSY OFFICIALS THAT NOTHING WAS BEING REQUIRED OF IMPORTERS OF U.S. PRODUCTS THAT WAS NOT REQUIRED OF IMPORTERS OF PRODUCTS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING EC MEMBERS. FURTHER, HE SUGGESTED THAT ONCE THE FORMALITIES HAVE BEEN MET WITH THE FIRST SHIPMENTS OF A PARTICULAR IMPORTER, THE INSPECTION AND OTHER PROCEDURES MIGHT BE RELAXED ON SUCCESSIVE SHIPMENTS.

3) ACCORDING TO A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE IMPORTERS ASSOCIATION, THEY BELIEVE SITUATION IS NOW EASED AND THAT

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NEW PROPOSALS ARE MORE FLEXIBLE AND NOT DISCRIMINATORY AGAINST U.S. INTERESTS. THE ASSOCIATION IS SUGGESTING TO THEIR MEMBERS THAT THEY CHOOSE THE SECOND ALTERNATIVE THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION HAS A MEETING SCHEDULED SOON WITH PERDRIX AND HE APPARENTLY HOPES TO CONCLUDE A KIND OF GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT.

4) WITH RESPECT TO IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW EC REGULATIONS (PER REF TEL B) FOURNIER EXPECTS THAT EACH COUNTRY WILL HAVE CONSIDERABLE LATITUDE FOR APPLICATION OF RULES. IT DOES NOT APPEAR FROM HIS VIEWPOINT THAT EC REGULATIONS WILL CHANGE SITUATION MARKEDLY FROM PRESENT RULES NOW BEING APPLIED BY GOF OFFICIALS IN THE BEGINNING PERIODS OF IMPORTATION OF U.S. PRODUCTS FREE FROM QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS.

COMMENT: DESPITE THE MORE OPTIMISTIC NOTE OF THIS MESSAGE
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SAGE, WE DO NOT ASSUME THAT WE ARE OUT OF THE WOODS YET. WE WILL STAY IN CONTACT WITH IMPORTER REPRESENTATIVES. WE ARE TOLD THAT LICENSES HAVE BEEN GRANTED ON SOME APPLICATIONS FOR DRIED VEGETABLES BUT AS YET NONE ON CANNED FRUITS. U.S. EXPORTERS SHOULD BE ESPECIALLY ON GUARD TO MEET FRENCH STANDARDS DURING COMING MONTHS AS IT APPEARS INSPECTIONS MAY BE APPLIED MORE RIGOROUSLY BY GOF ON FIRST SHIPMENTS.
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
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